

Maryland
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1861
House
EXTRA SESSION



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BY THE SENATE,
MAY 6th, 1861.

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REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS

APPOINTED TO WAIT ON THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

TO THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND.

EXTRA SESSION, 1861.

FREDERICK:

BEALE H. RICHARDSON, PRINTER.

1861.

REPORT.

FREDERICK CITY, May 6th, 1861.

To the General Assembly of Maryland :

The undersigned, Commissioners, have the honor to report to the General Assembly of Maryland, that they waited in person on the President of the United States, on the 4th instant, and presented to him a copy of the joint resolutions adopted by your Honorable Bodies on the 2d instant.

They were received by the President with respectful courtesy, and they made such representations as were necessary to convey to him the sense of the General Assembly of Maryland in relation to the occupation of the Capital of the State by the Federal troops, and the forcible seizure of the property of the State and of private citizens, in the Annapolis Railroad, and in the Washington Branch of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company; and in this connection, his attention was called to the suspension of intercourse between Baltimore and Washington, and of all parts of the State with Annapolis, and to the indignity put upon a State still in the Federal Union by such an interference with the private rights of its citizens, and by such an occupation of its soil and ways of communication by the Federal Government.

Full explanations were exchanged between the undersigned and the Secretary of War and the Secretary of State, who were present, and participated in the discussion, as to the facts and circumstances that rendered necessary the extraordinary incidents accompanying the passage of Federal troops through Maryland, *en route* to the city of Washington, and especially in reference to those acts of the authorities of the city of Baltimore which arrested the progress of the troops by the railroads leading from Pennsylvania and Delaware into Maryland, and of the opposition to the landing of the troops subsequently at Annapolis by the Governor of the State; and in connection with this action of the authorities of the State, the hostile feeling manifested by the people to the passage of these troops through Maryland, was considered and treated with entire frankness by the undersigned, who, while acknowledging all the legal obligations of the State to the Federal Government, set forth fully the strength of sym-

pathy felt by a large portion of our people for our Southern brethren in the present crisis.

Although many of the incidents and circumstances referred to were regarded in different lights by the undersigned and the Federal Government, even to the extent of a difference of opinion as to some of the facts involved, yet in regard to the general principles at issue, a concurrence of opinion was reached.

The President concurred with the undersigned in opinion, that so long as Maryland had not taken, and was not about taking, a hostile attitude to the Federal Government, that the exclusive military occupation of her ways of communication, and the seizure of the property of her citizens, would be without justification; and what has been referred to in this connection so far as it occurred, was treated by the Government as an act of necessity or self-preservation.

The undersigned did not feel themselves authorized to enter into any engagements or arrangements with the Federal Government to induce it to change its relations to the State of Maryland, considering it proper under the circumstances to leave the entire discretion and responsibility of the existing state of things to that Government, making such representations as they deemed proper to vindicate the moral and legal aspects of the question; and especially insisting on its obligation to relieve the State promptly from restraint and indignity; and to abstain from all action in the transportation of troops that can be regarded as intended for chastisement or prompted by resentment.

The undersigned are not able to indicate to what extent or in what degree the Executive discretion will be exercised in modifying the relations which now exist between the State of Maryland and the Federal Government, and in the particular matter of the commercial communication between the city of Baltimore and other parts of the country, brought to the attention of the General Assembly by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore; but they feel authorized to express the opinion that some modification may be expected. The undersigned feel painfully confident that a war is to be waged to reduce all the seceding States to allegiance to the United States Government, and that the whole military power of the Federal Government will be exerted to accomplish that purpose; and though the expression of this opinion is not called for by the resolutions of your Honorable Bodies, yet having had the opportunity to ascertain its entire accuracy, and because it will explain much of the military preparation and movement of troops through the State of Maryland, it is proper to bring it to your attention.

OTHO SCOTT,
ROBERT M. McLANE,
W. J. ROSS.

